1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

its base into the ground some way away from the grown-ups. It is quite a common sight to see little children who can hardly walk solemnly drinking their *chi* sitting in a circle round the communal cup. These babies quite often get rather drunk and flushed and hiccupy and unsteady on their legs and loud spoken; but this is usually followed very quickly by sleep and after a couple of hours they seem to wake up no whit the worse for their experience.

From about midday food is being served almost continuously; there seems practically no limit to what a Lepcha can eat and drink on a feast day. This is a typical menu of the food consumed per head between say, 11 o'clock in the morning and 9 o'clock at night at a good feast: 3 lbs. of rice served in two helpings; 3 *patyoot* of *chi* which were constantly replenished, and 3 cups of strained *chi* which is very much stronger and resembles a mild spirit; 2 double fistfuls of popped corn; about 2 lbs. of meat, one to eat and one raw piece to take home;[1] four helpings of tea; plenty of curry and vegetables with the rice and as much soup made from vegetables and stock as people cared to consume. For this feast every guest brought some contribution, but if the hosts had had to buy all the materials they provided the cost would have been at least Rs. 60 (about £5). This was considered a good party, but nothing extraordinary or out of the way.

All the time the feasting is going on the service continues intermittently; but there are intervals when the lamas come outside the monastery for a rest and to relieve themselves. Early in the day they wander down into the wood below the monastery, but later on, as they have eaten and drunk more, they just go to the edge of the built-up wall at the end of the monastery compound and squat down with their backs to the people. During these intervals also they shave one another's heads. Also from time to time they put their heads under a running stream to take away the fumes of the *chi*.

The rest of the people also get somewhat mellowed, though usually not noticeably drunk; I have never seen an adult Lepcha lose control of his movements through drink, though one or two of the older people get somewhat fogged in their speech. The younger women move about more than the others carrying the big ladles of boiling water to replenish the *chi* and handing out the food; they

[1] It is always the custom when the last dish is served at a Lepcha feast to put on top a portion of raw meat or sausage for the guest to take home and eat at leisure.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

553 Some time during the ceremony the child is given its first name.
846 This may be given by the officiating Mun, or suggested by anyone else present. Usually the father invites suggestions. Unless the child has some physical peculiarity or some peculiar circumstance connected with its birth the first (temporary) name is usually the day of the week on which it was born, in Tibetan.

833 Either three, seven, or twenty-one days after delivery the
846 husband copulates with his wife ritually, on the side and *a retro*, moving very slowly and gently, so that the semen may take away the pains of child-birth. If this is done after three days, it is called *sak-non mon-lok*, if after seven *tang-bong ʒaam*. It is only put off after seven days at the request of the wife, and there is no name for a later performance. Copulation *a retro* is fairly usual, though some people dislike it; it is considered more discreet than the normal position and is used when quietness is desired, and to avoid being noticed.

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853 For the first two days the baby is fed exclusively on its mother's milk; on the third day, at its birth feast, it is given a tiny pellet of pounded rice mixed with butter; and thereafter it is given a small bit of this mixture three times a day. At about the age of eight months it is given a little cooked and pounded rice, and after that the solid part of its diet is gradually increased. Babies are not
862 usually weaned until the birth of the next sibling, and there is usually an interval of three to four years between births; consequently the greater number of children are on a completely solid diet before they are weaned. It sometimes happens that the mother becomes pregnant again fairly quickly; in such cases the babies are fed on cows' milk and rice, a diet which produces pot-belly. This is exceptional, and only a couple of babies are thus malformed.

In the greater number of cases children are old enough to understand talk before they are weaned, and they are told that they cannot suckle any more because the new baby wants the milk; if the child will not accept this the mother smears her breasts with the new baby's excreta to disgust the older child. Children are always told that the new-born baby is Sang-rong *moong*, who is a bogey the size of a small child specially invented to frighten children; this is done to prevent young children handling the new-born infant, and also to scare them into renouncing the rivalry for the mother's breast.

On occasion weaning is accompanied by physical separation.

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Jiroong, who has extraordinarily precise memories of his infancy said that 'he was three when his sister was born. He was taking his mother's breast till the birth, which he witnessed and which frightened him very much. He was told that the new baby was Sang-rong *moong*. He was weaned in two ways; his mother's breasts were smeared with excrement, and a sister of his father took him away to her home and told him he must not cry because "Sang-rong *moong* was with his mother and would eat him". He remembers vividly that for a week he cried every night for his mother's breast, and then resigned himself to doing without. For some time his aunt looked after him, sometimes keeping him with her at her house, and sometimes going to his home and sleeping with him.' In the same way Tobgé's wife had sent her son, aged a little over two, to live with her parents in their village a day's journey away. Since she was not pregnant again this conduct was disapproved of; it was considered to be a further illustration of Tobgé's irresponsibility and her immorality. 862

Normally a child is only suckled by its mother, but if the mother dies, or for any other reason becomes incapable of suckling the child, it may be suckled by another woman whom the child will call 'mother', or occasionally by the grandmother. A child does not have more than one nurse at a time, and would not be given a feed by a lactating woman during the mother's temporary absence. The reason given for this is that in taking another woman's milk the child would contract a debt which it would never be able to repay; and this debt would be a burden to it after its own death. 853

It is a general Lepcha belief that any woman who has once borne a child can produce milk spontaneously when a baby sucks; and this seems to be borne out by the fact that on occasion if the mother dies the grandmother will suckle the grandchild. I myself saw Kurma's mother-in-law suckling her granddaughter, though it was over twenty years since she herself had borne her last child. Some women too can produce milk without having borne a child; at first this milk is indigestible for the infant, but it is subsequently perfectly all right. If the mother dies the husband's breasts will very often swell; but they only produce a sort of lymph and not proper milk. As far as my observations and inquiries go it seems clear that Lepcha women lactate with far more facility than European women. 853 147 827

A youngest child will continue sucking until the mother's milk dries up, or until the child 'becomes ashamed'; this may continue 853

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Pemba is Datoop's eldest son and is now twenty-seven, his wife being four years younger. He had already started his Lama's training when he was summoned to work in Gangtok. He remained at the palace for nearly ten years, when he left the Maharaja's service at his own request. Like his friend Chodu, he too was a scullion. When he was in Gangtok he learnt to wear boots and as a result still has very tender feet. His mother says that he was not weaned early; and perhaps because of this he was a very nervous child. We often noticed that he flinched at any sudden noise, and even now he says he cannot bear the sight of blood. He used to cry a lot when he first left home, but after his return on leave he soon found that he wanted to go back to Gangtok again. His parents told me they were very anxious while he was away from home and always used to visit him once a year. He was sometimes beaten as a child and would threaten to throw himself in the fire; but his parents would only laugh, and told him that if he really wished to die they would not prevent him. Although he still is rather nervous, and much more retiring than the average Lepcha, he does not appear to be in any way maladjusted. He is completely bilingual, speaking Nepali almost as well as his own language.

Pichi, aged twenty-three, is Datoop's second son. He has just returned from Gangtok, where he has spent the last eight years or so learning to be a carpenter. While he was still away from home his parents decided that it was time for him to be betrothed; but he sent back word that he was too busy to leave his work. For this reason his brother, a boy of fifteen, acted as his proxy at the ceremony. When Pichi came home the following year he at once made it clear that he had no intention of proceeding with this prearranged marriage, and said that when he wished to marry he would choose a wife for himself. The Mandal, who made all the arrangements, was somewhat perplexed at this state of affairs, such a case never having arisen before. He now thinks that in order not to cause offence the best thing is

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

868 its blade can be seen in most of the photographs of women
412 which illustrate this book, projecting from one side. There is no ceremony when a child is presented with its first knife or sickle.

845 Twins appear to be very infrequent, and there were none
777 in Lingtem. It is thought, however, that identical twins are lucky, fraternal twins being unlucky unless the girl is born before the boy, in which case it does not greatly matter.

853 When a child cries it is immediately given the breast, even
862 at night, and it is never at any time fed at regular intervals.
858 It sleeps with its mother until it is about five or six, or until the arrival of another child. The youngest child is never weaned and generally sleeps with its parents until it is about twelve years of age. There is no doubt that this has a considerable psychological effect upon the child, for it is very easy to recognise the youngest of a family at all stages of its life. As children they are much more fractious than others, and in later life are inclined to be neurotic. I am aware that this is a generalisation and as such not to be taken too seriously; but nothing short of a prolonged investigation by a trained psychologist, carried out over a considerable number of years, would give evidence of scientific value. I am informed, however, by the Hon. Mary Scott, who has been doing missionary work with the people of the Eastern Himalayas for the past thirty years, that Lepcha girls, when the youngest member of their family, are almost invariably of loose morals. She attributes this—rightly, I think—to the fact that such children have nightly physical contact with their parents until a much later age than is normally the case. When this is suddenly denied them it seems the natural thing for them to seek some other form of bodily contact; and thus it comes about that young mothers of illegitimate children are very frequently themselves the youngest of their families; but the evidence is insufficient to know if the two states can be definitely correlated. I am inclined to think, however, that they can; but this is merely a personal opinion.

[848]

853 Should a baby that is still being breast-fed become ill its
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